

Abstract

The present invention provides a skin cleanser comprising a chelating agent, a buffering agent, a carrier and a detergent such as cocamidopropyl betaine and at concentrations that avoid substantial irritation of the skin while having the ability to cleanse the skin surface of contaminants. The compositions are especially useful to cleanse the external ear canal of an animal. The chelating agent has a synergistic effect on the ability of the detergent to loosen cerumen and other contaminants from the skin surface, and also on the antimicrobial and antifungal activity of the detergent, thereby reducing microbial colonization that may develop into a pathological condition if not treated. The present invention provides methods for cleansing a skin surface by using the cleanser which may include more than one antimicrobial agent to inhibit the proliferation of a single invasive organism, or a mixed population of invasive organisms. The invention also provides kits that have packaging that includes instructions on how to prepare and use the compositions to cleanse the surface of the skin.